



**FAREWELL SERMON,**

**PREACHED IN THE**

**CHURCH OF RAMSAY, UPPER CANADA,**

**ON THE 10TH OF APRIL, 1842.**

BY 113

**THE REV. JOHN FAIRBAIRN.**

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**GLASGOW:**

**DAVID BRYCE, 101 BUCHANAN-STREET.**

**MDCCCXLII.**

TO  
THE CONGREGATION OF RAMSAY,

LATELY UNDER HIS PASTORAL CARE,

THIS SERMON

Is Affectionately Dedicated,

BY THEIR SINCERE FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.

## FAREWELL SERMON.

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"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."—2 CORINTHIANS xiii. 11.

THESE words stand at the close of the second epistle to the Corinthians. When the apostle employs the word *finally* at the beginning of this farewell admonition, it seems to imply that he had now finished all he had to say to them. He may be supposed to cast a momentary glance over the leading subjects of these two epistles, and having thus directed their attention to these, he intimates, that nothing now remained for him to do but to bid them farewell. The truths here brought before us, my brethren, are the same as I have constantly endeavoured to unfold and urge upon your attention, during the period of my ministry amongst you. It has been my unceasing aim to "preach Christ crucified,—Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God, unto them who are called;"—to show you our lost and ruined condition by nature, and our need of an almighty Saviour; and to impress upon you the unspeakable importance of believing on him from the heart. I have endeavoured to illustrate the nature of the Holy Spirit's work in regeneration; to set before you the inestimable privileges of those who have been renewed in the spirit of their mind by his omnipotent agency, and have become "temples of the living God;" and to convince you of the imperative necessity of being "born again," or "created a-new," before you can possibly enter the kingdom of heaven. And I have also endeavoured

to urge upon your attention the vast importance of good works. God sent his Son into the world, Christ Jesus shed his blood on the cross, and the Holy Spirit is given to them that believe, for this one purpose, that they may be rescued from the power and dominion, as well as from the guilt of sin, and restored to a state of perfect holiness. This is the grand end and design of the whole plan of redeeming love,—“Jesus Christ gave himself for us, that he might *redeem us from all iniquity*, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” Hence, we are told, “that without holiness no man shall see the Lord,” and that “every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.” “When the Son of Man comes in the glory of his Father, with his angels, he shall *reward every man according to his works*.” The good works of believers do not purchase for them a title to the inheritance of heaven; but, besides being the evidence of their faith in Christ, and their union with him, they are absolutely necessary as a personal qualification for enjoying the happiness of heaven. Holiness of heart and life, which is just another name for good works, is as requisite to the enjoyment of celestial bliss as the sense of sight is to enable us to derive pleasure from the beauties of nature. Moreover, this is the very essence, the sum and substance of salvation itself. It is to the diseased and perishing soul what returning health is to the sick and dying body, or what liberty is to the once enslaved, but now ransomed captive.

These, my brethren, are the great and fundamental doctrines of the gospel which I have been privileged to proclaim in the midst of you during these bygone years, and to the truth of which I have given you, on the former part of this day, a solemn and affectionate, because a last and final testimony. All these doctrines have been significantly shadowed forth to us in the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper, at which we have now, for the last time, sat down together. They have once more been solemnly proclaimed to us in the expressive language of signs. It has ever been the chief object of my ministry to hold up these truths to your view. “I, brethren,

when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God; for I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I have been with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling, and my speech and my preaching has not been with enticing words of man's wisdom." But I trust I may also say, with some measure of truth, that it has been "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." In saying this I claim no merit to myself. I have even at the best only discharged my duty, and been after all "an unprofitable servant." If any success whatsoever has followed my feeble efforts, the praise is not due to me, but to God. Mine has been but the humble office of a planter and a waterer,—God alone has given the increase.

It now only remains for me to take farewell of you, and in doing so, let us look first for a few moments at the simple circumstance itself of our separation from each other. It ought to be regarded, by both you and me, as a chastisement from our heavenly Father. To me it has come in the shape of family affliction. I am far from supposing that I shall be free from troubles in my native land; on the contrary, it is probable that I may be called to endure greater and more numerous trials there, than I have ever had to encounter here. The distracted state of the church at home renders it not at all unlikely that bonds and afflictions may yet fall to the lot of those who wish to be faithful to the Lord. At the same time, I have endeavoured to be guided by a sense of duty, and by that alone. It is a duty, however, which may, for ought I know, be followed by trying consequences. And it is certainly designed by God as a chastisement to me. To you also it is meant as a chastisement. Whatever be your opinion regarding my conduct, if you look beyond secondary causes, and recognize the hand of the Lord in it, you will at once see that he intends you to view it in this light. Our first duty then, my brethren, is to "humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt us in due time, casting all our care upon him, for he

careth for us." If we neglect to improve it aright, we may find in our bitter experience, that it will be converted into an awful judgment. The cause of our separation may be either the want of faithfulness, and zeal, and love, on my part, or the misimprovement of your privileges on yours, or both together. If, therefore, we do not earnestly seek for grace to sanctify it, it may be followed by the most disastrous consequences to us all. I may be left to sink down into a state of spiritual apathy, to become "a blind watchman, or like a dumb dog that cannot bark," and may never be permitted to gather another soul into the Redeemer's fold. And you may have a pastor sent to you, who shall prophesy smooth things, and lull you into a profound spiritual slumber, saying, "peace, peace, while there is no peace." But on the other hand, if we humble ourselves in the presence of God, and seek his face with deep contrition and godly sorrow, we may cherish the hope that this event, however dark and afflictive in the mean time, shall be ultimately overruled for his glory, and for our welfare. It will be one of the "*all things*" which God has promised shall "*work together for our good.*" In answer to our prayers, he may be pleased to employ me as an instrument in advancing his kingdom, and may render me more faithful and zealous than I have hitherto been. And for you, a pastor after his own heart may be speedily provided,—one who shall be an hundred-fold more abundantly blessed in his labours amongst you, than I have ever been. I have not the slightest doubt but God will hear and answer your prayers for this object, if you only plead with him earnestly and perseveringly, and continue united among yourselves. It is important for you, however, to remember, that if you really wish to enjoy his presence, and to obtain his blessing, you must be "knit together in love, and be of one mind, and live in peace." Beware, above all things, of doing any thing that will cause division or strife, or heart-burnings amongst you. Wait diligently upon God in all the ordinances of his appointment. Improve to the utmost those privileges which still remain to you. Do not forsake the assembling of yourselves together on the Lord's day. But let your united



praises and prayers ascend from this house on every returning Sabbath to the throne of the Highest. And you may rest assured that, in his own good time, a man shall be set over you in the Lord, whose ministry shall be greatly blessed, and in whose hands the work of the Lord shall prosper exceedingly. Thus shall this chastisement, "which for the present seemeth to be not joyous, but grievous, afterward yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto us, being exercised thereby." It shall "fall out for the furtherance of the gospel," and for the good of many souls. And we shall all be enabled to say with the Psalmist, "why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God."

It becomes us also, on the present occasion, to look back upon the years that are past, and to take a careful review of the manner in which we have performed our duties, and improved our privileges. We have been connected together as pastor and people for eight years and a half. During that period we have constantly been engaged, both in public and in private, in transacting about the great and momentous concerns of eternity. I have been set over you for the purpose of pointing out to you the way that leads to everlasting life, and of helping you, in so far as human instrumentality can help you, to escape from hell, and to reach the mansions of glory. The charge given to me at my ordination, was substantially the same as that given by the Lord to the prophet Ezekiel, "O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it, if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die,



O house of Israel?" It was said to me, as it was by the apostle Paul to Timothy, "I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine: watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." And it was your duty to receive me as an ambassador of Christ, to listen with docility to the message with which he intrusted me, to believe the doctrines proclaimed in his name and by his authority, and to obey his commands. For he has said concerning his messengers, "he that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me; and whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city." What account then shall we be able to give at the great day, of the manner in which we have discharged our respective duties since we first met together? This is indeed an awfully solemn and important question, but it is one which ought to be steadily examined, and thoughtfully answered. It will not do to blink it, nor to set it aside as unanswerable. It must be answered at the dread tribunal of Jehovah, and we be unto us if we defer its consideration till that day of final reckoning. It will be too late then to enter upon such an investigation for any practical purpose. The book of remembrance will speak for us then; and according to its righteous decision our eternal doom will be fixed. We should remember that many from amongst us have been called to give in their great account since we first met together. Some perhaps have entered the kingdom of heaven, and are now before the throne of God. And some, it is to be feared, have been cast into the lake of fire. We ourselves have made a wide step towards the eternal world; and we shall soon, very soon, be numbered with the dead. It becomes us, then, when God is solemnly calling us to consider-

ation, to look back upon the past, and inquire what preparation we have made for an endless eternity? We have, as it were, arrived at another stopping place in our journey to the world of spirits. We are summoned, as by a voice from heaven, to pause for a little in our pilgrimage through the wilderness, and God inquires of us, "what have you been doing?" "whither are you travelling?"

In reference to myself, I am well aware that I have but a poor account to give. I have, indeed, endeavoured to sound the gospel trumpet clearly and intelligibly, so that none might fail to understand its meaning. I have endeavoured to set before you the way of life, and the way of death; to preach Christ, and him crucified; and to do the work of an evangelist. And I trust I have been enabled to do this in such a way, as to deliver my own soul, so that if you perish in your sins, your blood shall not be required at my hand, nor be found upon the skirts of my garments. But I am conscious of innumerable imperfections, and shortcomings, and infirmities, and sins. These have mingled with all my services, and defiled the best and purest of them all. Had I nothing else to depend upon but my own works, I could never stand in the presence of him who searcheth the heart and trieth the reins. They would, one and all, condemn me. Were God strict to mark, and rigorous to punish, I could not hope to escape the damnation of hell. If weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, I should be found sadly wanting: deficient in zeal for the glory of God, deficient in faithfulness, deficient in love for perishing souls, and in watchfulness, and prayer, and faith. But from all my sins and countless transgressions, I hope to be saved by the merits of the Redeemer. That same precious blood of which I have so often been privileged to speak to you, can cleanse me also from all sin; and through its meritorious efficacy my services may be presented with acceptance before the throne. As an eminent saint of old said upon his death-bed, I would "cast all my good deeds and all my bad deeds into one heap, and flee from both to Christ for refuge." And I desire to "count all things but

loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I would be willing to suffer the loss of all things, and to count them but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Thus washed in the blood of Jesus, and clothed in the spotless robes of his righteousness; and thus alone, do I hope for acceptance with God at the great day. And if on that day he is pleased to pronounce upon me a sentence of approbation as a faithful servant, it will be for works done through the influence of his own spirit, so that all the praise and the honour shall be his. The language which it ever becomes me to use, both now and through eternal ages, is that which is put into the mouth of the church of old, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake."

In reference to yourselves, my brethren, I have in many things come far short of what you might have expected of me. For "I have been with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling." You have doubtless had much to bear with, both in my public and private ministrations. My infirmities and imperfections are both numerous and great. A sense of these, indeed, is one cause of my now leaving you. "My bodily presence has been weak, and my speech" may often have appeared to you "contemptible." For all my shortcomings, and my neglect of duty, and for any *unnecessary* offence which I have given any of you, I now ask your forgiveness. And let me also request you to carry these things to the throne of grace, and supplicate mercy and pardon from the Lord on my behalf. Pray, my brethren, for *me*, that they may not be kept in remembrance against me, but may be all washed away in the blood of the Lamb. And pray for *yourselves* that you may not suffer injury through my neglect or sins, but that every deficiency may be made up to you by the great Shepherd of the sheep. Beware, however, of taking encouragement to continue in sin, or to forsake the Lord, from any of these things. You will not be tried at the great day by my conduct.

The word of God is the one unerring standard by which we shall all be judged. And nothing that you have ever heard of or seen in me, will be a valid excuse for your disobedience to the gospel of Christ. If you "measure yourselves by one like yourselves," you do not act the part of wise men, but of fools. For you are not ignorant that God employs not angels in the glorious work of proclaiming the gospel to a perishing world, nor beings who have reached immaculate purity—but "men, and men involved in the same ruin, the same ignorance, as their fellow-sinners; men subject to the same temptations, carrying about the same burdens, labouring under the same infirmities, and aching with the same sorrows." We need your indulgence, we need your sympathies, we need your prayers. It is one of the heaviest burdens that we have to bear, when they, by whose kindness and forbearance, and prayerful remembrance, our hands when weak should be strengthened and uplifted, and our knees when feeble should be confirmed, and our hearts when discouraged and cast down should be cheered and animated, should be the first and the loudest to complain of our infirmities and failings. Ah! my brethren, you know not what a world of mischief you do by such conduct. You send many a keen and bitter pang to the heart of him who labours among you in holy things, you increase his care and anxiety an hundred-fold; and you do a fearful injury to your own souls. For such things as these, and for all unnecessary offence, and needless trouble, and anxiety and care, which any of you have given me, I freely forgive you. And my prayer for you is, that they may not be laid to your charge, but be cast into everlasting oblivion, and never rise up in remembrance against you. But do not forget that you must seek forgiveness from God; and *that* you never will obtain, if you take occasion from the imperfections or sins of others, to indulge in sin yourselves. You must stand or fall to your own master, and by your own actions. Seek to have these conformed to the high and holy requirements of the divine law. And henceforth learn from your own immeasurable shortenings, to judge more charitably and to speak more

leniently of others, especially of those who minister at the altar. For they, above all other men, need your indulgence, inasmuch as "Satan owes them a double grudge," and they stand in the hottest part of the conflict in which the people of God are engaged, and they are most exposed to the shafts of the enemy of souls.

Permit me, also, before I leave this part of my subject, to return you my sincere and hearty thanks for all the kindness which I have experienced at your hands. I came amongst you at first as a stranger, feeling myself to be a sojourner in a strange land, far from all my friends, and relatives, and former acquaintances. But God, whose name be ever praised, raised up friends for me here. *Kinder* friends than some of you have been to me; I never expect to meet with on this side the grave; nor do I ever hope to meet with a people who shall be generally more attached to me than the most of you have been, or who will listen with more patience and indulgence to all my exhortations and reproofs. For all your kindness, my brethren, and your forbearance with me, I again sincerely and cordially thank you;—and I pray God, that these your deeds of love towards me, may be remembered on that day when we shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ, and be rewarded by him who has given us this gracious promise, "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of those little ones that believe on him, a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily, I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."

But it is now time for me to ask you, my brethren, how you have improved the privileges which you have enjoyed during these bygone years? You well remember the day when I was set apart to minister among you in holy things. You rejoiced to see that day, and were glad. After a long period of spiritual destitution, when you wandered as sheep without a shepherd, you rejoiced to hear the sound of the gospel amongst you. It seemed as if "the wilderness and the solitary place was made glad by it, and the desert was about to rejoice, and blossom as the rose;" and you were ready to exclaim, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good

tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth." During these years, the gospel has been preached in your hearing from Sabbath to Sabbath; the Scriptures have been read; the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper have been administered; and a multitude of tracts and books have been circulated amongst you. The one grand end of all these means and ordinances, was that you might be persuaded to turn to the Lord with your whole heart, to repent of your sins with godly sorrow, and to believe on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that you might be washed in his blood, and sanctified by his spirit, and so enabled to walk worthy of God, and made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. If my ministerial labours have not produced these effects, they have been worse than useless to you. They may have rendered you more moral, and upright, and sober than you once were; or they may have induced you to become professors of religion, and contributed to your enjoyment;—but if they have failed in being the means of bringing you out of darkness into marvellous light, and of "delivering you from the power of Satan, and of translating you into the kingdom of God's dear Son," and of preparing you for dwelling in heaven, in the presence of him who cannot look upon sin but with abhorrence,—then they have only increased your responsibilities, and will fearfully aggravate your condemnation. The apostle says of the Corinthians, "We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life." There are, it is to be feared, many now present, of whom it must be said, that "I have been to them but the savour of death unto death." They have not received Christ Jesus as their prophet, priest, and king. They have not yielded up their hearts and affections to him as their Lord and Master; nor have they cordially enlisted in his service, nor consecrated themselves entirely to him;—neither have they sought and obtained from him the Holy Spirit to renew and sanctify their souls. They have not been born again: the



image of God has not been engraven anew upon their hearts. They may have undergone a wonderful reformation of character; they may be punctual in their attendance upon the various ordinances of religion; they may be well acquainted with their Bibles, and may pride themselves on their orthodox creed, or upon their enlarged views of divine truth;—but they have not given their affections to God. They do not love him supremely, nor “seek his kingdom and his righteousness first.” They are still earthly-minded. They do not live for eternity as strangers and pilgrims, whose treasures, and hopes, and homes are in heaven; but they live as citizens of this world, whose treasures and enjoyments are all confined within the narrow circle of time.

It is painful for me to take my leave of such persons; for when I part from them, I have the sad and lamentable conviction, that I leave them in the bondage of sin, and on the brink of eternal perdition. To you, my friends, I cannot with propriety, and in the proper meaning of the word, say, *Farewell*. You cannot fare well—you cannot, by any possibility, enjoy true happiness, nor prosper in your best and highest interests, so long as you remain in a state of estrangement from God. You are in reality the servants of sin, the drudges of the world, the children of the devil, and the heirs of hell. “The god of this world has hitherto blinded your minds, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto you.” Every sermon that you have heard, and every prayer that has been offered up on your behalf, and every tract that you have read, has only rendered your case more hopeless than ever. Your punctual attendance in the house of God, and your patient listening to the preaching of the gospel, and your christian name, and your religious profession, and your good morality,—these, if you can claim them, will not procure for you an entrance into the kingdom of heaven. No one can be admitted there, who has not been washed in the blood of the Lamb, and created anew by the power of the Holy Ghost. Whatever be your opinion of yourselves, or whatever be your character in the sight of men, God, who sees your

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heart, knows that it is not right with him. Some of you are engrossed with the cares, and anxieties, and business of this life; you are careful and troubled about many things; and thus you neglect the one thing needful. The momentous concerns of eternity are treated by you as matters of inferior importance. And thus you barter away the salvation of your soul, and the glories of heaven, and the favour of God, and the crown of life, for the perishing trash and dust of the earth. Some are eager to be rich, by which means you “fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.” Others are entangled with the pleasures and amusements of the world. They are unwilling to renounce its vain and foolish diversions, or they are afraid to endure the ridicule and scorn of their companions, who would taunt and mock at them for their preciseness and singularity. Some promise to repent at a future day; and others think themselves as good as their neighbours, and imagine that they do not need to repent, for they are already Christians;—and others are totally indifferent about the whole matter: they care for none of these things. Strange to say, too, they almost all entertain a hope of salvation. Whether they trust to their own good works, or to their orthodox creed, or their religious profession, or their freedom from disgraceful vice, or the mercy of God, or their promises of amendment, or to anything else, they all continue to cherish the fond expectation that it shall go well with them at last. Now, my friends, these hopes of yours are wholly delusive. They are refuges of lies, by which the devil deceives you, and keeps you at ease. You say peace, peace, to your souls, while there is no peace. The warnings and threatenings of God’s Word, are constantly sounding in your ears, though you heed them not. And you are told that unless you repent, and be born again, you cannot see the kingdom of heaven, but must perish in hell. Since you have not been transformed by the renewing of your mind, but are still conformed to the world in your spirit and in your whole manner of life, you cannot belong to the disciples of Jesus.

It is unspeakably painful to take farewell of you ; for when I do so, it seems like handing you over to the prince of darkness, whose servants you are—giving you up to a hopeless slumber—consigning you over to eternal damnation. When you depart from my presence, methinks I see you hurrying away to the service of the world, binding yourselves anew to its employment, and hastening onwards with fearful rapidity to the abyss of wo. It seems as if I were about to send you away to trample the blood of Christ under foot, to despise the offer of his mercy, to resist and grieve the Holy Spirit, to neglect the great salvation, and to ruin your immortal souls. Need you wonder, then, that I feel reluctant to take the last look of you, since the next time I shall see you may be on the left hand of the Judge, standing as condemned criminals, and waiting in consternation to hear the sentence of damnation pronounced upon you. Need you wonder that I am unwilling to utter that last and most affecting word, *Farewell*, since the next time that you shall hear my voice, may be when I am called up before the dread tribunal of God, to render an account of all who sat under my ministry, and when it will be heard only to condemn you. All my labours have hitherto proved in vain for you. I have tried to persuade you by the terrors of the Lord, and to win you by his love. I have endeavoured to set before you the dreadful nature of the torments of hell, and the blessedness and the glory of heaven. I have spoken to you of the wrath of God which shall come and abide for ever upon the children of disobedience, and of the wonders of redeeming love, which fill the inhabitants of the realms of bliss with surprise, and wonder, and ecstasies of joy. But you have turned a deaf ear to all these warnings, and invitations, and tidings of great joy. They have only, at the most, produced a momentary excitement of feeling, and a partial change of character. They have not awakened you from your deathlike sleep, nor wrought upon you such a complete renovation of soul, as is necessary for your admittance into the paradise above. In so far, therefore, as you are concerned, I am constrained to say, “I have

laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain; yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God." Think how any one of you would feel, if called upon to hold a last interview with an intimate acquaintance, or a bosom friend, who was soon to be led forth from a gloomy prison to suffer an ignominious death. Would you not heave many a heavy sigh as you thought of his approaching doom? Would not your eyes run down with tears, and a pang of unutterable sorrow thrill through your soul, as you turned away from him for the last time, and cast a longing lingering look behind you? Think then how painful it must be for one who has so long ministered among you, and laboured, and wept, and prayed for your salvation, now to leave you in the bondage of sin, and under sentence of eternal death. Oh, that it were possible, even yet before we part, to persuade you to flee from the wrath to come! Our next meeting will be amongst the assembled universe at the judgment of the great day. Let us take a momentary glance of the solemnities of that awful scene before we separate from each other. The trumpet of the archangel, we shall suppose, has sounded, and the dead of all the ages have been awakened from their sleep. The Judge is seated on the great white throne, surrounded by myriads of his holy angels. All the countless numbers of the human family are summoned before him. The judgment is set, and the books are opened, and the business of the great day proceeds. By and by he who now addresses you is called upon to give in his account, first of himself, and then of all who sat under his ministry. One by one you are made to pass before the Judge, and as you pass, he relates what he knows of you. Of one he will have to say, there is a man who loved the world, and the things that were in the world, better than his soul, or heaven, or God, or Christ. There is another who professed to be thy disciple, but who tried to serve God and mammon. There is another who halted between two opinions, and lingered about the borders of the Lord's camp, while his heart went after the pleasures, or amusements, or honours, or riches of the earth. Thus shall you all pass under review, and hear your character

described, and receive your doom according to the use you have made of your important privileges. Oh, how dismayed will you be, when you hear the righteous Judge say unto you, "depart from me ye cursed." It will be too late for you to plead for mercy then; your day of mercy shall then be gone for ever. And to all your pleas, this reply will be made, "I know you not whence ye are; you heard my words by the mouth of my servant, but you did them not; you refused to take up your cross and forsake all for my sake, wherefore I say unto you, depart from me ye workers of iniquity, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." Then shall you be driven away from the presence of the Lord into that dismal place "where the worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched." Then the wrath of God shall abide upon you for ever and ever. Dreadful, indeed, beyond all conception, shall be your disappointment; and unutterable anguish shall overwhelm your soul, when you shall turn your back upon the celestial city, and its gates of pearl, and its streets of gold, and its blissful inhabitants with their robes of white, and their triumphal palms, and their crowns of glory. For not only shall you be for ever banished from all these, but your portion shall be in the blackness of darkness, with apostate spirits and damned souls for your only companions. Such is the fearful doom that is reserved for you, if you do not speedily repent. But may you not yet escape from such a dreadful end? Yes, my friends, you may. If you listen to these last and solemn warnings which I have addressed to you, and believe on Christ, you too shall be saved. But if you turn again with indifference to your former course, and neglect the great salvation of the gospel, then shall you perish at last in hell. Remember I have often warned you of your danger, "neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness." And I once more warn you, and entreat and beseech you, to flee from the wrath to come. If you die in your sins, "your blood be upon your own heads; I am clear." You "shall not escape the judgment of God. For you despise the riches of his goodness, and

forbearance, and long-suffering. And after your hardness and impenitent hearts, you are daily and hourly treasuring up unto yourselves wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish." Oh, "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

But I must address a few words to those "to whom I have been the savour of life unto life." Some of you have been brought to a knowledge of the truth through other instrumentality than mine. But I trust I have, during these past years, been made a minister of grace to your souls. Others I may with propriety style "my beloved sons in the faith; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." Of all of you it can be affirmed, that "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in your hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." To take farewell of you, my dear brethren, is also painful. It reminds us that we are in a world of change and sorrow, and sin and death. But it has not that sad and melancholy feeling about it which a separation from the unregenerate awakens. For there is in your case the cheering prospect of meeting again in another and a better country, where partings are unknown. And then we shall not be, as we now are, partakers of mortality, and liable to trouble, and disease, and death; but we shall be clothed with honour and glory and immortality. It is true, many dangers beset you in your journey through the wilderness. You have many enemies to encounter, and many difficulties to overcome. You are afraid, too, perhaps, that "after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock; also, that of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." The apostle Paul forewarned the Ephesians of this danger. And you may think that it will not be surprising if the like thing befall you. You may, moreover, be afraid lest you yourselves should sink down into a state of



spiritual sloth, when deprived of the stated ministry of the gospel.

Now, my brethren, you have the remedy for all these evils in your own hands. First of all, it is an unspeakable blessing that you are aware of your danger. This, if rightly improved, will not lead you to despond, but to watch and pray. You will not be taken by surprise if any of these temptations or trials overtake you. The great shepherd of the sheep is able to protect you from every danger. If you follow him with simplicity of heart, and live in peace among yourselves, and continue fervent and persevering in prayer, he will preserve you from the mischievous attempts of those who would scatter you abroad. And another pastor will soon be provided for you, who will feed and nourish your souls. He who has the hearts of all men in his hand, is able to raise up a suitable person for your minister. If he gave his own Son for your salvation, it is surely but a small thing to expect that he will give you a spiritual guide. I am certain that if you ask it of him in faith, and with one heart and one mind, he will hear and answer your prayers. There never yet was an instance of fervent persevering prayer going unanswered; and your case will not form an exception to the truth of his word,—“All his promises in Christ are yea and amen.” He has said “Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find.” And “sooner shall the heavens and the earth pass away than one word of his shall go unfulfilled.” With regard to all your other trials and dangers, your Redeemer is both able and willing to deliver you from them. “In the world,” he says, “ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” He has conquered sin, and death, and hell; and he has assured you of victory over them too.—“His grace shall be made sufficient for you, his strength shall be made perfect in your weakness.” “Let not your heart be troubled, then; ye believe in God, believe also in Christ. In our Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, he would have told you. He has gone to prepare a place for you. And he will come again,

and receive you unto himself, that where he is, there ye may be also." Meanwhile he promises that "the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father shall send in his name, shall come unto you, and he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever he has said unto you," either in his word, or by his ambassadors. "This spirit of truth, whose office it is to testify of Christ, and to guide you into all truth, shall abide with you for ever." Yea, "he dwelleth in you, and shall be in you." The word of God is also in your hands. You have constant access to the throne of grace. The Sabbath will return with undeviating regularity. And God will still be found in his sanctuary by those who wait upon him. He is ever near you, by night and by day. "He is your sun and your shield: the Lord will give you grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

Having such invaluable privileges as these in your constant possession, and having so many precious promises to encourage you to hope that a faithful shepherd shall soon be provided for you, and above all, having God for your portion, Christ for your Saviour, and the Holy Ghost for your Comforter, I can with perfect confidence commit you to him who has redeemed you from sin and from hell. I can say to you as the apostle Paul did to the elders of Ephesus, "and now, brethren, I commend you to God, and the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Though we shall never see each other again in the flesh, we shall enjoy daily communion together. The bond which unites us can never be broken. For we are united in Christ, members of his body, branches of the living vine. We may be far separated from each other on earth. The wide sea may roll between us. But wherever we are we shall still be serving the same blessed Master. We shall daily meet around the same throne of grace. We shall read the same precious word, and sing the same sweet songs of Zion. We shall still be engaged in the same great warfare, clothed in the same celestial armour, wielding the same spiritual wea-

pons, and fighting against the same spiritual enemies. And we shall be travelling constantly upon the same highway to Zion, where at last we shall soon meet in the same everlasting and happy home. Wherefore "let us not sorrow even as these which have no hope." Yet a little while, and "the mystery of God shall be finished." The angel of the Lord shall proclaim that "time shall be no longer." The heavens and the earth shall pass away. The dead shall arise. The judgment shall come, and Christ Jesus who died for our salvation, shall receive us all into his kingdom and glory. Then shall eternity begin to roll, and the jubilee of redemption shall commence. Thenceforward we shall never again be separated from each other. We shall dwell for ever and ever in the same blessed abode, and chaunt the same celestial strains. Death shall never enter there to tear us asunder, nor shall any afflictive Providence cause us to part. "Our sun shall go no more down, nor shall our moon ever withdraw itself. For the Lord shall be our everlasting light, and the days of our mourning shall be ended." No strife nor animosity shall ever disturb our peace. But we shall dwell together in perfect unity and harmony and love. The sight of sin shall never more grieve and vex our souls. All shall be pure and holy there. No cloud of sorrow shall ever again darken our brow. Nor shall a sigh ever escape from our lips. We shall "see the face of God, and serve him day and night in his temple, and his name shall be in our foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and we shall need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God shall give us light, and we shall reign with Christ for ever and ever." "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared in that world of glory, for them that love him." They far transcend our highest conceptions. Wherefore, my dear brethren, when your hearts are filled with sorrow, think on these bright and glorious prospects which are before you. You will not meditate long upon them, till "your mourning is turned into dancing; till you put off your sackcloth, and gird yourselves with gladness." They will cheer your spirit in its

saddest and loneliest hours. And you shall be encouraged to start with renewed energy and alacrity, upon your pilgrimage to Zion. You shall from time to time be enabled to "go on your way rejoicing, with songs and everlasting joy upon your heads." For you shall feel a confident assurance that you shall ere long "obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall for ever flee away."

"The time draws nigh, when from the clouds  
Christ shall with shouts descend;  
And the last trumpet's awful voice,  
The heavens and earth shall rend.

Then they who live shall changed be,  
And they who sleep shall wake;  
The graves shall yield their ancient charge,  
And earth's foundation shake.

The saints of God, from death set free,  
With joy shall mount on high;  
The heavenly hosts with praises loud,  
Shall meet them in the sky.

Together to their Father's house,  
With joyful hearts they go;  
And dwell for ever with the Lord,  
Beyond the reach of wo.

A few short years of evil past,  
We reach the happy shore,  
Where death-divided friends at last,  
Shall meet to part no more."

In conclusion, to one and all of you, my brethren, I must now say, farewell. I must now take my departure from amongst you. But though I leave you, I shall never, never forget you. While memory holds her seat, and so long as my faculties remain entire, I shall remember you with deepest interest and much affection. Let me only ask you in return, to remember me daily at a throne of grace. Wherever I go, I shall need your prayers. Let all my imperfections, and

Infirmities, and faults, and sins be forgotten. Let the exhortations, and warnings, and admonitions, and instructions, which have addressed to you, be kept in remembrance. Let my example, in so far as it has resembled that of Christ, be followed. "I charge you all before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing, and his kingdom," so to live that you may receive from him on the great day the joyful salutation, "well done, good and faithful servant." Seek that city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Begin now, if you have not already begun, your pilgrimage to the celestial city. Fight the good fight of faith, and Christ will give you the crown of life. Let us all diligently strive to enter into the rest prepared for the people of God, lest any of us seem to come short of it. And oh! may we be enabled so to believe on the name of Jesus, and so to follow him on earth, that when he comes to judge the world, it may be given unto me to present you all before him without spot and without blemish, and to say, "Lord, here am I, and the children thou hast given me."

"Now, may the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ." "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy—to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

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